



A Brief Introduction to Anarchism

Anarchy is not what you would expect it to be. There is no bomb throwing, no chaos, and no lack of rules. In reality, anarchists support voluntary, horizontal organization. If you wish to learn more, read this book.



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Myth #1: Anarchists want violent chaos

Actually this could not be further from the truth. We want the exact opposite of this, organization. The type of organization we want is **horizontal** and voluntary.

Myth #2: So Anarchists are against all governments?

Again, this is not true. While we are against a **state**, we define a state as being marked by 3 things:

1. A “monopoly of violence” in a given territorial area
2. This violence having a “professional” institutional nature
3. A hierarchical nature, centralization of power and initiative into the hands of a few.

Myth #3: There is no alternative to the current system

According to mainstream political thought, this would be correct. However when one looks at the real situation, we see that there are several examples of successful modern anarchist societies, such as Rojava and Chiapas, Mexico.

So what is Anarchism then?

Anarchism is a social movement that seeks to abolish all oppressive systems. Anarchists advocate a society that is free of economic and social classes, hierarchy, and governmental states. Instead we want a society where everyone takes collective responsibility for the health and prosperity of society.

Additional Reading

An Anarchist FAQ – Various Authors

Conquest of the Bread – Peter Kropotkin

What is Anarchism? - Alexander Berkman

Anarchism and Other Essays – Emma Goldman

Anarchy Works – Peter Gelderloos

Anarchism: From Theory to Practice – Daniel Guerin

God and the State – Mikhail Bakunin

Karl Marx – Capital

Anarcho-Syndicalism – Rudolf Rocker

The Organizational Platform of the General Union of Anarchists – Various Authors

Quiet Rumors: An Anarcha-Feminist Reader – Various Authors

Many of these titles are available online or from AK Press, a collectively run anarchist publisher. Please support the anarchist press and buy directly from anarchist publishers.

most popular one is communism. This has nothing to do with the Soviet Union or China. Instead it means that private property is abolished (with respect for personal property), and the means of the economy are controlled collective by those who work at a workplace and the surrounding community. There is no currency system and instead a gift economy is used. The exact details of this are complicated and will not be discussed in entirety here.

Online Resources

<https://libcom.org> – News, forums, eBooks

<https://theanarchistlibrary.org> - eBooks

<https://akpress.org> – Book Publisher

<http://anarchistnews.org> – News

<http://www.anarchistagency.com> - News

<https://itsgoingdown.org> – News

<http://iww.org> - the Industrial Workers of the World

<http://foodnotbombs.net> – Food Distribution Direct Action Group

<http://www.blackrosefed.org> - Federation for Anarchists

in the United States

<http://anarchistfaq.org> - A frequently asked questions for anarchists

<http://reddit.com/anarchy101> - A site for new anarchists

The way we see it, the root of all problems in today's society is hierarchy.

Hierarchy: a system or organization in which people or groups are ranked one above the other according to status or authority.

This is the dominant principle of the society we live in. In the field of work, you have a boss who gives orders and is to be obeyed, or you will lose your job and be homeless. Nothing could be more coercive than this. In the field of politics all we can do is vote for someone to rule over us. And even there, all we have is a choice of a lesser evil. This is not freedom.

Principles of Modern Anarchism

- Autonomy – All people deserve the freedom to define themselves on their own terms. No one should dominate other people.
- Anti-capitalism – Anarchism is absolutely opposed to the domination, alienation, rabid consumerism, greed, hierarchy, social ills, and all of the many problems with capitalism. No anarchist is in favor of capitalism, as it is irreconcilably oppressive.
- Anti-statism – We see the state as a tool of hierarchy, domination, and capitalism. We are opposed to police, prisons, armies, politicians, and the very structure of the state itself.
- Anti-racism – Anarchists are against all forms of racism and racial discrimination. While, there is no such thing as race in a scientific sense, it has a very real effect on those who are discriminated for it.

- As such we must support all movements for the liberation from racism, such as Black Lives Matter.
- Social Ecology – All anarchists today have embraced the environmentalist movement. However, we believe that nearly all of the world's ecological problems stem from social problems.
 - Feminism – Feminism is a core part of modern anarchism. We see patriarchy and gender roles as a manifestation of coercive hierarchy, and oppression. We are in favor of the abolition of the imbalance between genders, and the strengthening of equality. Don't let the name fool you, feminism is about equality for all human beings. It only focuses on women due to the historic oppression of women being greater than that of men. All anarchists (at least today) MUST be feminists. This is a very complicated subject and it will not be dealt with sufficiently here. As such, you should educate yourself further on feminism.
 - Queer Liberation – This is not just supporting same sex marriage. Many anarchists are not in favor of marriage, however this is a personal choice. Rather we mean the liberation of queer people from heterosexism, homophobia, and anti-queer hatred. This is very tied to Feminism, and the two are often combined into Intersectional feminism
 - Direct Action – Instead of parliamentary politics, and elections, we instead seek to act directly. There are many types of direct action, however some examples are strikes, occupations, protests, and acts of solidarity. Whenever possible, we seek to avoid violence. Terrorism is never direct action.
 - Direct Democracy – This means that decisions should be made by the people they affect directly and that instead of electing representatives, people use direct democracy. This entails consensus decision making to make decisions at the local group level, and then sending a delegate from the group to a regional group to decide on matters. These delegates would do exactly as instructed by their local groups and would be instantly recallable. This is the basis of federalism.
 - Mutual Aid – also known as solidarity, this is co-operation between free and equal people. People should help each other voluntarily. Bonds of solidarity and generosity form a stronger social glue than the fear inspired by laws, borders, prisons and armies. Mutual aid is neither a form of charity nor greed. It means that people help each other for the benefit of all involved. Peter Kropotkin provides a scientific basis for this in evolution in his book *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution*.
 - Revolution – Anarchists do not believe that reforms by the state can bring about anarchism. Rather, the working class must bring about a new society themselves. When revolution comes, all aspects of life will be radically transformed in way that is compatible with anarchist principles. Some examples of attempted anarchist revolutions are the Spanish Revolution of 1936, Rojava today, the Zapatista uprising in Mexico, and the Paris Commune of 1871.
 - Socialism instead of capitalism. This means that workers have direct control of the **means of production (economic means)**. There are several proposed socialist economic systems, however the